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Remarks/Arguments

In paragraphs 1-2 of the Action, claims 1-9 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over by Okura.

In reply thereto, applicant respectfully argues as follows.

Object of the Invention:

JP 2002-8753 discloses an electrical connector assembly for connecting a pair of circuit boards. Since the electrical connectors are of the low profile and the circuit boards are relatively large, it is difficult to fit the plug into the socket. Thus, it is an object of the invention to provide a low profile electrical connector for facilitating the introduction of a mating connector to the plugging position (Specification, page 3, lines 4-7).

First Composition of the Invention:

As clearly defined in claims 1-3, 6, and 8, applicant's invention comprises a peripheral wall having an upper face including a first surface in an outside area and a second surface that is positioned in an inside area and lower than the first surface and higher than the terminals and a slant surface between the first and second surfaces, thus allowing the mating connector to slide on the second surface within the first surface, thereby making it easier to position the mating connector relative to the electrical connector prior to applying a final plugging force.

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With respect to the prior art, Okura discloses a low-profile electrical connector assembly comprising a socket base 11, vertical slots 15 provided in each bank 12, ribs 16 integrally molded with the socket base 11, spring contacts 24, and a recess 13 defined by the banks 12.

However, Okura neither discloses nor suggests any first surface (13A) that is in an outside area of the upper face of the peripheral wall (13) and higher than the second or inside surface (13B). See Specification, page 6, line 24 through page 7, line 3. In fact, Okura shows an indented outside surface (pointed out by numeral 11 in Fig. 2).

Also, Okura neither discloses nor suggests any slant area between the first surface and the second surface that is lower than the first surface but higher than the terminals. When the mating connector (30) is moved in the lateral or longitudinal direction with the lower face (31A) sliding on the upper face of the peripheral wall (13), the housing (31) enters a space between the inside areas (13B) without difficulty. When the lower face (31A) slides on the dented upper or second surface (13B), the connector (30) is guided into the receiving space (16). See Specification, page 9, lines 14-32.

The Action states, "However, Okura's device fails to explicitly disclose the height or the size of the first surface. It would have been obvious matter of design choice to have the first surface higher than the terminals, since such modification would have involved a mere change in size of a component."

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However, first of all, applicant claims that the second surface, which is lower than the first surface, be higher than the terminals.

As stated above, applicant's invention does not involve a mere change in size but the addition of a new component, i.e., the first upper surface that is raised from the second upper surface with the slant surface therebetween, thus facilitating the introduction of a mating connector into the receiving space of the electrical connector.

For these reasons, it is submitted that applicant's invention as recited in claims 1-3, 6, and 8 is patentable over Okura.

Second Composition of the Invention:

As clearly claimed in claims 4-5, 7, and 9, applicant's invention comprises a plugging protrusion provided in the receiving space and having an upper face that includes a first surface positioned higher than the upper face of the peripheral wall, a second surface provided in a periphery of the first surface and being substantially flush with the upper face of the peripheral wall and higher than the terminals, and a slant surface between the first and second surface.

When a mating connector (30) is off from the connector (10) in the lateral or longitudinal direction, its lower surface (31A) abuts against the projecting upper surface (14A) of the connector (10). While the mating connector (30) slides on the upper surface (14A), the lower surface (31A) falls

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to the flat portion (14B) through the slant surface (14C), thereby bringing the mating connector (30) to the accurate plugging position.

With respect to the prior art, Okura neither discloses nor suggests any plugging protrusion in the receiving space of a connector. Thus, it is submitted that applicant's invention as claimed in claims 4-5, 7, and 9 is patentable over Okura.

In Conclusion of the Action, claims 10-11 are objected to. Prior the plugging limitation features and with rest of the claims limitations.

In reply thereto, applicant does not understand the sentence "Prior ..." and respectfully requests clarification.

In view of the foregoing, it is respectfully requested that this application be reconsidered, claims 1-11 allowed, and the case passed to issue.

Respectfully submitted,
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